

Westline

EPA Region 3

Pennsylvania

McKean County

Westline

EPA ID# PAD980692537 **Last Update:** August 2002

5th Congressional District **Other Names:** None

Current Site Status

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency cleaned up this site, and the site no longer poses a threat to public health or the environment. The EPA deleted the site from the National Priorities List of the nation's most hazardous waste sites in 1992.

Site Description

This 40-acre site is located on the northern side of Westline, McKean County, Pennsylvania. During the first half of the 1900s, a lumber processing plant operated on the site. Its chemical plant converted lumber into charcoal, methanol, and acetic acid. In 1952, a fire and explosion caused the facility to close. The owners left the plant's foundation, demolition debris, and a tar-like production waste containing high levels of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) which are byproducts of petroleum, and various phenolic compounds. This waste material was disposed of, or flowed into, natural or excavated depressions located hundreds of feet away within the town.

The site encompassed most of Westline and its adjacent streams, including Kinzua Creek and Turnip Run. The dispersed waste tar deposits were up to nine feet thick. A 1,500-square-foot, six-inch thick deposit was removed from behind the Westline Church; an even larger deposit was removed in 1983. Plant-related contaminants were detected mainly in surface soils.

As of 1988, however, domestic wells no longer were being used. Westline now uses an unpolluted spring for its water supply. This spring is north of the town. The surrounding area is rural, and the town is surrounded by the Allegheny National Forest. Westline has a small, permanent resident population of about 100, which increases seasonally. Hunting and fishing camps are located throughout the town.

Site Responsibility

This site was addressed through Federal actions.

NPL Listing History


Our country's most serious uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous waste sites can be cleaned using federal money. To be eligible for federal cleanup money, a site must be put on the National Priorities List (NPL). This site was proposed for listing on December 30, 1982. The site was added to the NPL on September 8, 1983.

Once Superfund site work is done, it is evaluated to see if the remedy is effective. If the goal of the work is reached, and EPA determines that nothing else remains to be done, the site is then removed from the list of sites eligible for federal Superfund funding . This site was deleted from the NPL on October 14, 1992.

Threats and Contaminants

The area has been cleaned up, thus protecting human health and the environment. Benzene was the groundwater contaminant that caused the most concern. Volatile organic compounds (VOCs), chemical components of solvents, were detected in one monitoring well. Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) petroleum byproducts from the tar deposits, rainwater infiltration, migration in surface water and

movement in the air posed a threat to people who came in direct contact with, inhaled, or ingested contaminated materials. Water and food chain contamination were negligible since the town began using the nearby spring as a new drinking water supply. The town is located in a 100-year flood plain; areas containing tar could have been subject to erosion if a flood had occurred, possibly causing contaminants to enter the Allegheny Reservoir. Low levels of VOCs were found in Kinzua Creek, which discharges into the Allegheny Reservoir.

Contaminant descriptions and associated risk factors are available on the Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry, an arm of the CDC, web site at <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/hazdat.html> 

Cleanup Progress

In 1983, the property owners placed a fence and warning signs around the property. Also in 1983, EPA emergency workers capped the largest tar deposit with clay, then covered and graded the area with clean fill that was seeded and mulched. Cracks soon appeared in the cover, however, and liquids again began leaching from the area. At this point, EPA excavated and removed 2,000 tons of tar and contaminated soils from the site.

The EPA controlled the source of contamination by excavating tar from all known deposits and any that were discovered during the work; removing contaminated soils; backfilling and revegetating excavations; transporting contaminated materials to an EPA-licensed facility for incineration; conducting groundwater studies; and checking the flood plain area periodically for tar deposits newly exposed by erosion. Removal of tar deposits was completed in 1990. The activities included further, but not total, removal of the major tar deposit below the surface. This area has been cleaned up to levels that do not pose a threat to public health or the environment.

EPA has completed all planned cleanup activities and will continue periodic visual inspections to ensure that safety levels are maintained. The site was deleted from the National Priorities List in 1992.

Contacts

Remedial Project Manager
Roy Schrock
215-814-3210
schrock.roy@epa.gov

On-Scene Coordinator
Mike Zickler
215-814-2792
zickler.michael@epa.gov

Community Involvement Coordinator
Lisa M. Brown
215-814-5528
brown.lisa@epa.gov

Governmental Affairs
Michael D'Andrea
215-814-5615
dandrea.michael@epa.gov

Detailed public files (Administrative Record) on EPA's actions and decisions for this site can be examined at the following locations:

Bradford Area Public Library
67 West Washington Street
Bradford, PA 16701

U.S. EPA Region III
6th Floor Docket Room
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103
215-814-3157

Please call to schedule an appointment.